

FOUR
GENUINE LETTERS,

WHICH LATELY PASSED BETWEEN A

NOBLE LORD,

AND A

YOUNG WOMAN OF FASHION.

To which is added,

A LETTER from a Lady to Miss *****.

WITH A

COPIOUS PREFACE,

Setting that Affair in a true Light.

BY A FRIEND OF THE EARL OF *****.

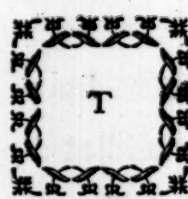
L O N D O N:

Printed for the EDITOR, in whose Hands the Original Letters
may be seen.

Price TWO SHILLINGS.



P R E F A C E.

 HERE is a malignity, I am sorry to say, natural to the mind of man; which occasions us to receive a malicious pleasure in the knowledge of the vices and errors of our superiors in rank and fortune, which, by debasing them with us, exalts us with ourselves, by the flattering comparisons, which we never fail to make, to our own advantage.

A LATE unhappy affair, in which a nobleman is concerned, with a young lady of the first rank for beauty and accomplishments, has given occasion for a great deal of the envy and ill-nature abovementioned to display itself.

IT is very far from the design of the Editor of the following pages, to attempt a defence of a fact, which is, to be sure, in itself of the most atrocious kind; but he appre-

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hends that the well-disposed and candid will think it admits of some sort of palliation, from the youth of the parties concerned, from passions stimulated by ease and abundance, and the irresistible power of love. *into*

He knows, very well, the moralists will cry out, " Love is a romantic affection ; and the passions may be bridled : " but discretion, which in a very great degree is necessary to bridle the passions, is the gift of but very few, and still fewer of the wealthy and great, than of any others. There are some constitutions, especially in the height of youth, which are of so fiery and impetuous a nature, that they instantly break the rein which Reason endeavours to hold them in, and hurry us, in spite of ourselves, to the precipice : 'tis time alone, let preachers say what they will, that must mellow the spirit of such constitutions ; and they are most happy who are under such circumstances of life as deaden and depress them, which Reason, alone, is seldom able to do.

BUT

BUT should these doctrines bear no sway with the severity of those who consider the frailties of human nature; when submitted to unpardonable offences, the Editor begs leave to advance another plea, which, though it may still appear less plausible, he has always reflected on as a cause operating to bring about the union of the two persons at present so much the subject of public discourse and attention; ---he means, that affinity of mind and inclinations, call it sympathy, or what you will, which may act upon two people at their births, so as to enforce their love of, and attachment to each other.

THE Greeks imagined this to arise from a certain conjunction of the stars, by them called Synastria; which was supposed, by many learned men of those times, to have occasioned that vehemence of passion, with which the great Queen Elizabeth adhered to her favourite Lord Robert Dudley, afterwards Earl of Leicester; nor is it possible, indeed, otherwise to account for the undeserved love which that wise and prudent princess lavished upon one of the most worthless

worthless of God's creatures. And the Editor would be glad to know, if we are not allowed to imagine, that somewhat of this influence subsisted, between the noble Earl and the young lady he now treats of, whether it will be possible to account for their behaviour in any other manner?

FOR a vicious propensity alone will not be a sufficient answer; since, undoubtedly, a sense of shame and self interest would have been able to keep them within such bounds as to have supported a fashionable reputation, as many persons of rank, at this time do, who live in the most criminal intercourses.

BUT the matter is plain, the Earl of ----- and Miss ----- loved, and were impelled to one another with such force, that they could not live asunder; and so they might enjoy the desired society, they cared not what road they took to arrive at it. It is well known, that, if this had not been the case; if their passion for one another had proceeded from a sudden gust of lewd desire only, his Lordship
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P R E F A C E.

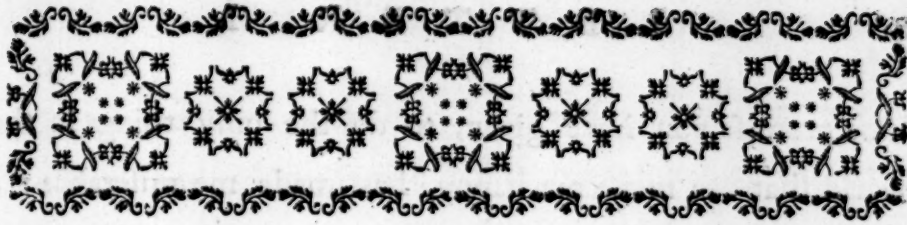
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and the young lady might have taken very different measures from what they did ; and it amounts to almost a certainty, that, had they been under any thing less than a fatality, they never would have forsaken their friends, fortune, country, and reputation, as they have done.

The subsequent letters should never have been published, but in support of this opinion, or did they contain any thing which might in the least tend to cast additional spots upon their characters. The reader is desired to take notice, that the two first printed letters passed between the parties near four months after the two that are printed last ; and that the fifth letter, which is written by a lady of quality, was delivered to the Editor, to be sent to Miss -----, the day after her elopement, under a supposition that he knew where my Lord ----- and she then were ; which, however, he declares he did not ; and he hopes that his printing her Ladyship's letter will not be considered as a breach of confidence ; since he conceals her name, and the contents redound so much to the honour of the writer.

L E T T E R

FOUR



LETTER I.

FROM A

NOBLEMAN,

TO A

YOUNG WOMAN OF FASHION.

(No Superscription.)

My dearest, dear girl!

I HAVE been here ten days, almost pestered to death with impertinence and business; however, I have at last settled every thing, or shall between this and Thursday, as I would have it.

It is impossible to give you any idea of what I have felt, on your account, since I saw you; how contradictory this is!

B.

The

The promise you have given, to do the only thing in the world that can make me happy, has made me miserable : I know your fears, your delicacies, and judge of a thousand other feelings you must have, upon this occasion, by those in my own breast ; but as with me love is superior to them all, so I will flatter myself, that the same powerful motive works with you, and expels and overbears every consideration that would come in competition with it.

I HAVE thought, ten thousand times, of what you said to me the night before I left town ; how could you at once be so kind and so cruel ! There are terms which men and women impose upon themselves, merely to make them unhappy ; and ruin is one of them.

It is true, I swear it by all that's sacred, you are not only essential to the happiness of my life, but the duration of it ; I cannot live without you : but do you think that I would suffer your tenderness, your regard for me, to involve you in ruin ?

THAT

THAT we shall both incur the censures of the world, I believe; but where is the action, so justifiable, that will not? Happiness is the pursuit of all; and I am determined to make myself happy, without imbittering that happiness by reflecting on what the too busy, or too idle, may say of the means I took to acquire it. My dear girl, adopt those sentiments, and, from the day we meet, let us only think of making one another happy.

As for myself, I quit every thing without regret, and shall never wish to see England again from the moment I leave it; and yet there is one person whose anger I incur with unwillingness, to whose service I am more attached than any thing in the world, except yourself; but this is one of the duties which must be violated by me; and, I do assure you, I am much more sorry for it, than any thing I shall loose in consequence. But an event (which I will not wish for, however) may happen, to restore us both to that situation, in the world's eye, which inevitable misfortune must shortly remove us from. Why, my dear,
why

why cannot I wipe out the transactions of the six last years of my life, which would make three people happy, and injure no mortal alive? I would give half my estate to do it.

THE person did not arrive here till late last night, and the poor devil is in such a condition that she must stay a night to rest herself; however, I believe you may depend upon having this on Sunday. In the mean time, I beg, for God's sake, you will make your mind as easy as you can; which I am glad to find by your billet (for your letter is not much more) you are determined to do.

THE flutterings you mention, on seeing her Ladyship at court, are natural, but of no consequence; your dear little heart is susceptible of every tenderness; and her speaking to you in a friendly and obliging manner, when you knew that she had reason to suspect, and did suspect, that you wholly possess'd the heart she would, but never can, engage.*---You talk of her good-nature, her gentleness, and sensibility,

* Here seems to be something omitted, which is requisite to make up the sense.

and,

L E T T E R I.

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and with somebody in a foolish play, "Sure no wife had
"ever so many useless good qualities."

I AM impatient to see you, and the hopes of soon having
that pleasure almost transport me beyond myself. Depend
upon it, my dear angel, that I will be at the place appointed
on Thursday night: if your mother should not be well
enough to go with you, I wish you would come with a cer-
tain person. I would, but cannot tell you, how much I am,

Yours,

This letter has neither
date or name.

P. S. I smiled at your story about the HORSE BOOK; you
have not half so much courage as you would make me be-
lieve; that story has betrayed you.

C

L E T T E R

L E T T E R II.

Thursday morning.

YOU are angry with me, no doubt, but it was impossible for me to meet you; my mother was not well, and she would not trust me out of her sight; but I shall certainly be at the opera on Saturday.

I LONG to be out of this house; in short, I am on the wing, and ready to take flight when you please: and yet, perhaps, if I was to consider every part of your letter, the fears too natural to me would be increased. I will not say what the motives are which work with me; let all I have suffered, and all I am determined to do, speak them.

You will hardly believe that I have been made very uneasy again, by the renewal of a certain person's addresses; one should

should think he had been surfeited so much with his last wife, that he would hardly have an inclination to another meal of matrimony; and his assurance in soliciting me, whom he knows to have refused so many matches, superior to himself in every thing but fortune, is insufferable! But I suppose there will be no great occasion for me to make your Lordship any protestations, about my resolutions, never to suffer the promises I have given you, to be shaken by any wind that can blow from that quarter. But the perturbations of spirit which all those things occasion, through a restlessness, and awkward restraint to my behaviour, which my father takes notice of, frighten me very much; I need not mention his continual tenderness of me, your Lordship knows it; and, though I resolve to forfeit it, yet I cannot think of the loss without tears.

As to what she mentions, in regard to time and place, I cannot say any thing about it; I give myself wholly to your directions, and shall be guided by you in every thing. You are very obliging for the provision you think of making for
me

me; to be sure, I shall not be able to carry a shred from hence. I have a thousand things to say to you, but am obliged to write this in bed, with a pencil. If I can find an opportunity to put it down on paper, I will have something for you again Saturday, which you must take care to take unobserved. In the mean time, think of, and pity me.

Your affectionate,

And most faithful

* * * * *



L E T T E R

L E T T E R III.

To Miss * * * * *

My dear girl,

WHAT have you done! how could you, knowing the fondness of my heart, try it with such a letter, and at this time too; I must upbraid you; I must call you either inconstant, or malicious.

CONSIDER, I am past tricks; your little arts might do well in the beginning of a passion, but to a settled love, that is arrived to the highest degree, instead of increasing, it might lessen it, were mine capable of diminution. But I will imagine I have mistaken your meaning.

My dear, dear creature, think no more of that odious word wife; let her be banished from your thoughts, as she is from my heart; let her never appear, though but in a dream, to fright our joys, or disturb our happiness: let

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us look forward to content and pleasure, and leave all behind us that contributes not to make us blest'd.

REMEMBER that three weeks are past since I have seen you ; and three weeks, to a man in my situation are a tedious age : 'tis now seven o'clock ; the bearer will be with you by eight, and, by her, I expect permission to see you. For heaven's sake, my dear creature, if you can contrive me this blessing, manage it so, that I may see none of the family but yourself, for I must be a longer time with you than will be convenient to be taken notice of, lest they should suspect something which might yet ruin us ; but I am so impatient to see you, I cannot live another night without it.

PERHAPS, you may deny seeing me alone through fear ; but, for heaven's sake, have a kinder opinion of me. Secure me by what vows, imprecations, or ties you please ; bind my hands, blind my eyes, command my tongue, do what you will ; but let me hear you speak three words to me, and have the pleasure of knowing myself to be in
the

the same room with you; and, if you will be so kind, give me leave to plead a little for my life and passion.

I WOULD fain endeavour to remove your fear, but though I should never be so happy as to succeed, it will at least be a satisfaction to me to know, that it is not through my own fault that I am eternally miserable.

My dearest girl,

Your's, for ever.

I HAVE ordered the bearer to wait in the place appointed; but resolve, by some means or other, to see me to-night; her Ladyship is disposed of at next door; the opportunity is lucky, not that I fear her jealousy, but we will not make her uneasy.

Friday evening.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R IV.

Monday Morning.

I DO not understand either your Lordship's letter or your message. Can you be jealous of me; can you believe me capable of deceiving you, or of loving another? Why should I pretend what I ought to be ashamed of? But, if you have really conceived such strange imaginations, can I give you a stronger proof of my affection than I have offered? Let me ask you, what can I propose to myself, in this adventure, but shame, dishonour, reproach, eternal infamy, and everlasting destruction, perhaps both of soul and body? But I am resolved to stand the shock of all; and, therefore, intreat your Lordship not to add to my anxieties, by giving me any cause to suspect affectation on your side, bymaking a shew of passions which I have never given you any reason to feel.

'Tis

'Tis very true, the person you mention has, by my mother's means, whose favourite he is, had permission to visit here; but how I have received him be you judge, if ever it was your fate to entertain a woman to whom you had an entire aversion. I will not, I hope I need not, my dear Lord, say any more on this occasion.

As to what you mention about my coming to the opera, I will try it; but believe it will be to no purpose, for I am confident my mother will not let me go abroad with the person you mention. You see, my Lord, what a dreadful thing indiscretion in woman is, since title and fortune can't keep off infamy; and what a much greater load, than even her Ladyship bears, am I going to draw upon myself?--- But, once more, I say, I am armed for the worst that can befall me, which is, my being rendered a public talk, who, I've reason to fear, am too much the subject of private whispers already.

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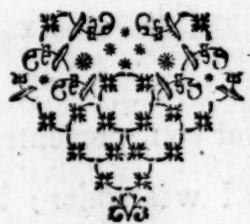
I MUST now tell you of an odd accident; the bearer of your last letter put it between the folds of the ruffles she brought me home, fearing she should have no other opportunity of giving it to me: my mother was in the room, took up the box, and went with it open in her hand towards the window; the bearer whispered me what was in the ruffles; I declare solemnly I had like to expire in the place: I grew cold, and turned pale, and gave myself up for undone and ruined; but, not to terrify you longer with fears of my danger, my mother contented herself with taking up the topmost ruffle, praised the clearness of the muslin, laid it down again, and went into her own chamber.

SHE tells me you have turned off your servant, which I imagined before. I saw him fauntering in the Park yesterday; he pulled off his hat to me; I believe I looked filly; but my mother pitied him extremely for having lost your favour: she has a very good opinion of you; I hope you'll never give her reason to alter it.

As

As I am extremely afraid I shall not be able to go to the opera, if you are at the route on Monday, I believe you may depend on seeing me at Charing-cross; but, if a certain person is with me, pray be very cautious, because she has of late given me a great deal of advice, and seems to be suspicious.

The name only.



L E T T E R

L E T T E R V.

To Miss * * * * *

My dear * * * * *,

I HAVE long foreseen the misery to which you must arrive by your fatal correspondence with my Lord ----- You know I have often hinted it to you, and, with tears in my eyes, intreated you, if matters were carried farther between you than I then hoped they were, you would in time break off so fatal a connection.

NOTHING but love for you, prevented my then informing your father of the fears I was under ; but, Kitty, you have deceived me, and I must now, in some measure, impute your ruin to myself. I beg, for God's sake, my dear girl, that, if this comes to your hand, and your destruction is not yet compleat, you will return to your disconsolate family.

CONSIDER

CONSIDER the infamy of being a prostitute! And yet, in this affair, the act itself is not the greatest sin, but the manner, which carries with it an unusual horror. Consider, my dear, my Lord is a married man, married to one of the most deserving women in the world, and one whom, within these six years, he married for love: was there no other motive to bring you to a right sense of things, think, will not the same caprice, that induced him to break every law, divine and human, by which he was bound, to a person, in all respects deserving of him; think, I say, will not the same caprice cause him hereafter to abandon you, to whom nothing but his vices incline him, to whom he is bound by no duty, and in forsaking whom he will run no risks, because you will have no one who will think you worth defending.

I NEED not tell you, that there is, at this present time, in London, an Italian lady of distinction, under the infamous circumstances of a kept mistress, after having been seduced from her husband, her friends, and her country, by an indiscrete passion for the Earl of -----.

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I NEED not mention to you, your father and your family, and the great grief and dishonour you will bring to them, if you now behave unbecoming of your birth, your education, and, let me add, even of your sex : but, my dear, you will not only plunge them in misfortunes, but be instrumental in bringing disgrace and inquietude upon two of the noblest families in this kingdom. What must be at this time the situation of poor Lady -----, in the flower of her youth and beauty deserted by a man who has engrossed her affections, and to whom duty, and the laws, oblige her to be faithful ; whom her tenderness for her little infant will never suffer her to hate ; the wife is robbed of her husband, the child of his father, by you ; and yet, such is my opinion of the Earl's disposition, that, I believe in my conscience, was my Lady the wife of any other man, she would be one of the first women he would endeavour to run away with.

So, my dear Kitty, if you can be weak or wicked enough to think his Lordship's love will be a sufficient atonement for the affronts, censures, and reproaches it will bring upon you,
you

you see upon what an uncertain possession you lay out your reputation and virtue; and, once more, I say, remember and believe me, there is no lasting faith in sin; he that has once broke his promise, solemnly given before God and the world, will be again perjured to Heaven and you, and all mankind.-----I believe I have tired you with this long, distracted epistle; but I have yet a word or two more to say, of your father, whom I believe you love, and whose whole pride and pleasure is centered in you; in spite of all his understanding and fortitude, I assure you, I believe this fatal step of yours will be the death of him: think, think of this, my dear, and retire from ruin.

WHAT is past may be got over; it will be only looked upon as the indiscretion of a girl; and a short retirement in the country, with the countenance of your friends, will soon bring the world over to your side; but, if you go on, after such a shameful action you must obscure yourself in some remote corner, for ever, where honesty and honour are never heard of: you will be loathed, scorned, and abandoned by
all.

all. Nay, I repeat again, by this very man who is the cause of your destruction.

His good sense is now over-ruled by the heat and passions of a vicious youth; but those once abated, depend upon it, should he cohabit with you till then, he will reflect, what sins, what evils, what inconveniences and shames, his lewd passion for you has brought him to; and he will not be one of the last to hate and forsake you.

DEAR Kitty, return, return! and make all that truly love you, happy; none more so, than,

Your affectionate, &c.

F I N I S.